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ABSTRACT

Information regarding the recruitment, retention, placement, and career enhancement of diverse populations was provided by 35 purposefully selected departments of agricultural education. The institutions that were included in the telephone interviews were chosen to provide geographic, 1862 and 1890 land grant, and nonland grant representation. Major findings included the following: 17 universities identified minority students in at least 1 of their recruitment or retention activities for undergraduates; 12 universities mentioned minority students in at least 1 of their recruitment activities for graduate students; and no university mentioned special retention activities for minority or women graduate students. Thirteen universities indicated they did nothing special to recruit or retain undergraduate students from diverse populations; 10 universities stated they did not do anything different or special to recruit or retain graduate students. The most common type of diverse population recruitment identified was that of including pictures of minorities and women in recruitment brochures and other related materials. Two universities did not consider women as minority students in agricultural education. Nine universities indicated the major recruitment tool for diverse population graduate students was financial aid packages. No university identified doing anything special or different for diverse population students to help them secure professional positions at graduation or after employment. (YLB)

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DIVERSIFYING THE PROFESSION
Recruitment, Retention, and Career Enhancement Strategies Utilized with Under-represented Groups

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

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AAAE President Bob Stewart appointed the ad hoc Involving Diverse Populations in Professional Development Committee and issued a charge that was captured by the following questions:

1. What strategies are being used by departments of agricultural education to recruit and retain diverse populations of students (i.e. minorities, women, and other underrepresented groups)?

2. What types of assistance are departments providing to help students from diverse populations secure professional positions *at graduation*?

3. What types of professional development activities are departments providing for the above graduates *after* they assume positions in teaching, extension, universities, agribusinesses, etc.?

The Committee approached its charge by seeking the desired information from 36 purposefully selected departments of agricultural education. The institutions that were included in the telephone interviews were chosen to provide geographic, 1862 and 1890 land grant, and non-land grant representation. After the 36 institutions were identified, each committee member contacted the department chair or a knowledgeable faculty member in six institutions to secure the desired information. A two-page interview schedule was developed to secure the information. Thirty-five of the 36 institutions provided usable data. Some of the major findings regarding the recruitment, retention, placement, and career enhancement of diverse populations are presented below. Conclusions the committee reached are presented at the end of the report.

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Summary of Responses to the Diverse Populations Survey

WHAT STRATEGIES ARE BEING USED BY YOUR DEPARTMENT TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN DIVERSE POPULATIONS OF STUDENTS?

Strategies to Recruit Undergraduates

Freq	Comments
13	Nothing special is done for diverse populations. **
10	Currently enrolled students or graduates serve as recruiters and/or ambassadors.
10	Visitations to community colleges and high schools.
8	Presentations to recruit from College of Agriculture seminar classes.
7	A recruitment booth is used for various meetings and programs.
6	Recruiters participate in state and national FFA and FHA meetings.
5	Direct mail, telemarketing, and advertising (Ag Ed News Letter, College of Agriculture Brochure).
5	One-on-one contact with prospective students (professors talking to prospects).
4	Communicate (phone or letter) with teachers and agents to identify potential students.
3	Special recruitment programs.
3	Host high school agriculture field days.
3	Network with other university outreach services.
2	A recruitment video is provided to high school guidance counselors.
2	Provide special tours and visits for students and teachers.
2	Undergraduate scholarships (for all students).
2	Serve on College of Agriculture Recruitment Committee and work with College of Agriculture recruiter.
1	Recruitment posters on buses and at various campus locations.
1	Transfer credit agreements with community colleges.
1	Teams of recruiters visit out-of-state locations (e.g., Chicago and Philadelphia).

Minority Emphases

10	Brochures and related printed materials are used with pictures of minorities and women.
5	Articulation with minority youth conferences.
4	Articulation with college or high school Minority Apprenticeship Programs.
3	Special recruitment programs for underrepresented students.
3	Minority grants or financial opportunities.
2	Special person in Dean's office recruiting students from diverse populations.
2	Target female students into Ag Ed (few minorities in the state).
2	Faculty target areas of the state that have high concentrations of minority students.
1	Interview minority students enrolled in two-year schools.
1	Native American course taught to all undergraduates.
1	Minority representation on the faculty indirectly encourages minorities to attend.
1	Recruit international students from other countries (including women and minorities).
1	A wide array of both gender and color exists in our department (undergraduate and graduate).
1	White students constitute the predominant under-represented group in our department.
1	Limited ethnic minority students.
1	No problems recruiting and retaining women.

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Strategies to Retain Undergraduates

Freq	Comments
11	Students are encouraged to participate in departmental student organizations.
10	None or nothing special is done for diverse populations.
10	Scholarships and/or financial aid for continuing students (all undergraduates).
8	Students are assigned a faculty advisor.
7	University student assistance program, counseling, tutors, etc., are available.
6	Peer advising, counseling, and tutoring.
5	An open door advising policy is maintained.
5	One-to-one faculty and student relationships and mentoring are encouraged.
3	Freshman orientation and/or seminar.
3	General supportive activities.
2	Faculty participation in campus mentoring program.
2	Mentoring and counseling of disqualified and probationary students.
2	Special student teaching fund for all students.
2	Student weekend retreat.
1	Weekly leadership seminar for all students.
1	Student outcome assessment.
1	Provide recognition for students through organizations.
1	Suggestion box is used to solicit input from students.
1	Alumni assist with retention and providing resources.

Minority Emphases

2	We have always had a number of female students so I do not consider them to be different.
2	Special courses or programs for diverse populations students (e.g., computer literacy).
1	Students are paired with minority faculty members.
1	College provides special support person for minority students.
1	We encourage minority students to join university groups designed for students from diverse populations.

Strategies to Recruit Graduate Students

Freq	Comments
10	Nothing different or same for all students.
9	Scholarship, fellowship, and/or assistantship programs for all students.
6	Recruit at both state and national teacher meetings.
5	Numerous recruitment activities in College of Agriculture and College of Education.
5	Personal recruitment letters, direct mail.
4	Brochures and related printed materials are used.
4	Advertising in state and national publications.
4	One-on-one contact with prospective students by faculty members.
3	Currently enrolled students serve as recruiters.
3	Off-campus courses are used to recruit teachers and related professionals.
3	Word of mouth; satisfied alumni.
2	Faculty, administrators, and the USDA liaison officer are good recruiters.
2	Travel expenses paid for student prospects to visit the campus.
2	Publicize alternative certification program.
2	Small graduate program, therefore, recruitment is not a high priority.

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2 Teams of recruiters visit out-of-state locations and utilize personal contacts in other states.
1 A booth and/or display is used for various meetings and programs.
1 The fifth-year program enables students to gain a master's degree and/or certification.
1 College graduate locator service.
1 Informational video tape about understanding of teaching agriculture.
1 International Sister School.
1 Advertising in Peace Corp publications.
1 Identify qualified students via referral.
1 International extension course offered to all students.
1 Provide advising and mentoring.

Minority Emphases

9 Fellowships/financial packages for minority and women students.
4 Work with the University to recruit women and minorities.
1 Faculty target areas of the state that have high concentrations of minority students.
1 Many of the minorities in the program are international students.
1 Brochures aimed at international students.
1 Participate in minority recognition programs.
1 We don't have minorities.

Strategies to Retain Graduate Student

Freq	Comments
16	Graduate assistantships, fellowships, scholarships are incentives for all students.
13	Strong faculty advising/mentoring.
12	None or nothing different is done for diverse populations.
11	Involving students in the work and activities of the department.
8	Involve students in campus activities and professional organizations.
6	Scholarships/financial aid.
4	Provide office space.
3	One-on-one relationships with faculty.
3	Involve students in research projects early in their college careers.
2	High completion rate once students enter the program; getting students in the program is most difficult.
2	Not a concern; we are successfully retaining students.
2	Graduate division support and resources.
2	Weekly leadership seminar.
1	Provide student recognition (i.e., Gamma Sigma Delta and Phi Kappa Phi).
1	Advertisement.
1	Flexibility.

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WHAT ASSISTANCE DOES YOUR DEPARTMENT PROVIDE TO HELP STUDENTS FROM DIVERSE POPULATIONS SECURE PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS AT GRADUATION?

Freq	Comments
17	Circulate and post placement letters or position announcements for graduates.
12	None or nothing special is done for diverse populations.
10	Write letters of recommendation.
8	Professional seminar (how to interview, write academic vitae, etc.).
6	Provide student support for attending national meetings.
5	Career planning and university employment services.
4	Faculty members make personal student contacts when jobs become available.
3	Recruiters who come to campus are used as guest lecturers, presenters, etc.
3	Network through alumni and business contacts.
3	Make personal contacts when appropriate.
3	Encourage students to apply for positions including those beyond state boundaries.
2	Encourage students to publish while in school.
2	Internships.
2	Students complete placement forms.
2	Placement not a problem for qualified students.
2	Use of department telephone.
2	Encourage students to read the Chronicle of Higher Education.
1	Close ties are maintained with teachers who are nearing retirement so graduates can be placed.
1	Faculty mentoring.
1	Teacher induction program.
1	Keep program broad based and flexible.
1	A list of certified teachers is sent to all schools.

WHAT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED AFTER GRADUATES ASSUME POSITIONS IN TEACHING, EXTENSION, UNIVERSITIES, AGRIBUSINESSES, ETC?

Freq	Comments
18	Inservice programs and graduate course work.
11	Faculty and or supervisor mentoring and advising.
10	No special programming for diverse populations.
10	New teacher workshop and/or program.
8	Vacancies are posted.
5	Alumni newsletters.
4	Encourage students to pursue a master's degree.
4	Faculty make on-site visits to assist first year teachers.
4	Career planning and employment services.
4	Recommend graduates for professional activities/leadership, etc.
4	Letters of reference.
2	Follow-up with all teachers one year after graduation.
1	Encourage co-authoring of journal articles and paper presentations.
1	Modules, videotapes, and resource materials developed.
1	First-year internship program.

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Major Findings

1. Seventeen universities identified minority students in at least one of their recruitment or retention activities for undergraduates, and 12 universities mentioned minority students in at least one of their recruitment activities for graduate students. However, no university mentioned special retention activities for minority or women graduate students.

2 Thirteen universities indicated that they did nothing special to recruit or retain undergraduate students from diverse populations. Similarly, 10 universities stated they did not do anything different or special to recruit or retain graduate students. In general, the comments listed for undergraduate and graduate recruitment and retention included all students.

3. Of the 17 universities specifically mentioning minority students, the most common type of diverse population recruitment identified was that of including pictures of minorities and women in recruitment brochures and other related materials.

4. Five universities stated that they had articulated with minority youth groups or conferences in their state for undergraduate recruitment.

5. Two universities did not consider women as minority students in agricultural education.

6. Nine universities indicated that the major recruitment tool for diverse population graduate students was financial aid packages including scholarships, fellowships, and grants specific for minority and women students.

7. No university identified doing anything special or different for diverse population students to help them secure professional positions at graduation.

8. No university identified doing anything special or different for diverse population students after they had assumed positions in teaching, extension, universities or agribusiness.

9. Universities reported that much of the recruitment and support for diverse population students are conducted through articulation with their college or dean's office.

Conclusions

1. Nothing special or different has been done in most agricultural education departments across the nation for recruitment and/or retention of students (graduates and undergraduates) from diverse populations.

2. Universities that emphasized recruitment of diverse populations tended to be located in states with high minority populations.

3 Most universities that responded to this survey did not perceive recruitment, retention, and support after graduation of diverse populations a problem or concern.

4. As educators in agricultural education plan for the future and prepare to serve a global economy, there is a great need to increase their awareness of and knowledge about diverse populations both in the United States and other countries.

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